

COMPLIMENTARY



The Advent



When Difficulties besiege you
know that the Divine Grace is with
you.



The ADVENT

APRIL, 1960

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CHRYSTAL

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INTRODUCTION: THE MOTHER'S COMMENTARY

- All power comes from The Divine but it is more usually misused than used
spiritually or rightly.

SRI AUROBINDO

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THE MOTHER



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THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS*

MOTHER'S COMMENTARY

ON

SRI AUROBINDO'S *Thoughts and Aphorisms*

XI

"Immortality is not the survival of the mental personality after death, though that also is true, but the waking possession of the unborn and deathless Self of which body is only an instrument and a shadow."

HERE there are three statements about which questions have been asked. First, "what is mental personality?"

In every human being the body is animated by the vital being and ruled or partially ruled by a mental being. This is a

Based on the Mother's Talks

general rule, but the degree to which the mental being is formed and individualised differs in each individual. In the great mass of human beings the mind is a fluid thing and has no organisation of its own and therefore it is not a personality. And so long as the mind is like that, fluid, unorganised, without a cohesive life of its own and without personality, it does not survive. What constituted the mental being dissolves in the mental region when the body, the substance constituting the body dissolves into the physical substance.

But as soon as the mental being is built up, organised, individualised and becomes a personality, it does not depend any longer on the body for its existence, and therefore survives the body. The earthly mental atmosphere is full of beings, mental personalities who live quite independently, even after the disappearance of the body and can reincarnate in a new body, when the soul, that is to say, the true self, reincarnates; for the latter carries with it the memory of its past lives.

But that is not what Sri Aurobindo calls Immortality. Immortality is life which has neither beginning nor end, which is not born nor does it die but is absolutely independent of the body; it is the life of the Self, the essential being of each individuality, and it is not separated from the universal Self. And this essential being has the sense of unity with the universal Self; in fact it is a personified, individualised expression of the universal Self, and that has neither beginning nor end, neither life nor death, it exists eternally and it is that which is immortal. When we are fully conscious of this Self, we take part in the eternal life and therefore we are immortal.

But usually a little confusion is made over this word "Immortality"—it is not new, it is made very often—; When one speaks of immortality, most people understand by it the indefinite duration of the body that is spoken of.

The body cannot last indefinitely unless, first of all, it becomes fully conscious of this immortal Self and is united with it, identified with it to the extent that it has the same capacity, the same power

for constant transformation, which allows it to follow the universal movement,—that is an absolutely indispensable condition for duration. It is because the body is fixed, because it does not follow the movement, because it is unable to change with sufficient rapidity to identify itself constantly with the universal evolution, therefore it decomposes and dies. It is its fixity, its hardness, its incapacity to change that compels it to undergo destruction so that its substance may return to the general fund of physical substance and recreate itself in new forms and thus be able to progress further. But generally when people speak of immortality, they think that it means physical immortality; it is well understood that such a thing has not till now been realised.

Sri Aurobindo says that this is possible and even that it will come, but he puts one condition; it is that the body must be supramentalised and that it must share in the qualities of the supramental being which are the qualities of plasticity and constant transformation. And when Sri Aurobindo writes that the body is only an “instrument and a shadow”, he speaks of the body as it now is and will be probably for a very long time. It is only an instrument of the Self, a very inadequate expression of this Self, and a shadow—a shadow, that is to say, something hazy and obscure in comparison with the light and the distinctness of the eternal Self.

How can this shadow, this instrument serve the growth of the soul and how can one be helpful to future lives by cultivating the instrument, is a question which does not lack interest.

Each time a soul incarnates in a new body, it comes with the intention of gathering a new experience that will help its growth and make it more perfect. It is in this way that from life to life the psychic being forms itself to become an altogether independent and conscious personality which, when it reaches the summit of its development, can choose not only the time of a new birth, but also the place, the goal and the work that is to be done.

Its descent into a physical body is necessarily a descent into

obscurity and ignorance and unconsciousness, and for a long time it has to work simply to bring a little bit of consciousness into the matter of the body before it can make use of the body to have the experience for which it came. In this way if, by means of a reasoned and clear-sighted method, we cultivate the body, we help at the same time the growth of the soul, its progress and enlightenment.

Physical culture consists in putting consciousness into the cells of the body. You may know or may not know it, but this is a fact. When we concentrate on moving our muscles according to our will, when we put an effort to make our limbs supple, to give them an agility or strength or resistance or plasticity which they have not naturally, we infuse into the cells of the body a consciousness which was not there and thus make of it an instrument that is homogeneous and receptive and which progresses in and by its action. Of course, this is not the only thing that brings consciousness into the body, but it is a thing that acts quite in a general way, which is rare. I have already told you many times that the artist infuses a great deal of consciousness into his hands, the intellectual into his brain, but it is a thing, so to say local, whereas physical culture has a more general action. And when you see the absolutely marvellous results of this culture, when you observe to what extent the body can be perfected, you understand how much that may be helpful to the action of the psychic being that has come there into matter. For, naturally, when it is in possession of an instrument that is organised, harmonised, full of strength and suppleness and possibilities, that considerably facilitates its work.

I do not say that people who are doing physical culture do it with this end in view, because very few know that this is the result, but whether they know it or not, the result is there. Besides, if you are a little sensitive, when you see the movement of the body of one who has gone through a rational and methodical physical culture, you notice a light, a consciousness, a life that does not exist in others.

There are many who see things in quite an external way and say : "These workmen, for example, who are compelled to do

hard work, who, by necessity and by profession, learn to carry heavy weights, develop also their muscles, and instead of passing their time, like the aristocrats, in doing exercises that have no useful external result, these people at least produce something..." It is an ignorance, for there is a fundamental difference between muscles developed through a special, localised and limited use and those that are cultivated deliberately and harmoniously in accordance with a total programme that leaves no limb without work or exercise.

People like workmen and peasants who have a special occupation and develop specially certain muscles possess always a professional deformation, and that does not help in any way their psychic progress. Because life as a whole necessarily helps the psychic progress but in a way so unconscious and so slow that the poor psychic has to come back again and again and yet again and indefinitely in order to reach its goal. Therefore we may say without the risk of making a mistake that physical culture is the sadhana of the body and all sadhana necessarily helps one to reach the goal. The more one does it consciously, the quicker and the more general is the result, but even if one does it without looking further than the end of one's fingers or foot or nose it is helpful to the total growth.

To conclude, it can be said that all discipline whatsoever, if it is followed strictly, sincerely, deliberately is of considerable help, for it makes the earthly life reach its goal more rapidly and prepares it to receive the new life. To discipline oneself is to hasten the arrival of this new life and the contact with the supramental reality.

Such as it is, the physical body is nothing but a shadow, a very disfigured shadow of the eternal life of the Self, but this physical body is capable of a progressive growth; through each individual formation the physical substance progresses and one day it will be able to throw a bridge between the physical life as we know it and the supramental life that will manifest.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

IT is equally ignorant and one thousand miles away from my teaching to find it in your relations with human beings or in the nobility of the human character or an idea that we are here to establish mental and moral and social Truth and justice on human and egoistic lines. I have never promised to do anything of the kind. Human nature is made up of imperfections, even its righteousness and virtue are pretensions, imperfections and prancings of a self-approbatory egoism...what is aimed at by us is a spiritual truth as the basis of life, the first words of which are surrender and union with the Divine and the transcendence of ego. So long as that basis is not established, a sadhak is only an ignorant and imperfect human being struggling with the evils of the lower nature.

What is created by spiritual progress is an inner closeness and intimacy in the inner being, the sense of the Mother's love and presence etc.

7-9-1935

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You do not know what is in others and why they fail. You know what is in yourself and you have to have the sincere will to overcome it. If you do that then you can progress, until you arrive.

25-7-1935

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It is a matter of the mechanism of the nature only and it is no use getting afflicted or depressed over it. That is the wrong attitude. You have to remain perfectly quiet and get the habit of calling in the Light and Force until you are able at will to set the mechanism right whenever it goes wrong by bringing back the higher condition. It has taken time, but you must have the patience to go on till it is done.

15-7-1935

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It is Prakriti or Nature that acts; the Divine does not compel people to do anything. Nothing can happen without the presence and support of the Divine. Yes, Nature or Prakriti is the Divine Force and it is this that works out things but it works them out according to the nature and thought or with the will of each man which is full of ignorance—that goes on until men come to the Divine and become conscious of Him and united with Him. Then only can it be said that all begins to be done in him by the direct Will of the Divine.

SRI AUROBINDO

15-5-1935

FROM THE MOTHER

It is not from disgust for life and people that one must come to yoga.

It is not to run away from difficulties that one must come here.

It is not even to find the sweetness of love and protection, for the Divine's love and protection can be enjoyed everywhere if one takes the right attitude.

When one wants to give oneself totally in service to the Divine, to consecrate oneself totally to the Divine's work, simply for the joy of giving oneself and of serving, without asking for anything in exchange, except the possibility of consecration and service, then one is ready to come here and will find the doors wide open.

I give you the blessings given to all my children wherever they are in the world and tell you, "Prepare yourself, my help will always be with you."

30-3-1960

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a series of connected strokes that form a stylized, somewhat abstract shape.

THE 29th FEBRUARY, 1960

ON the 29th February last, there was a celebration of an unprecedented grandeur and significance at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. It was the first anniversary of the descent of the Supermind, the Rita-Chit or Truth-Consciousness, into the earth-consciousness.¹ Four years ago, on 29th February, in 1956, which was a leap year, the descent had taken place, and was announced by the Mother as follows :

“Lord, Thou hast willed and I execute :
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.”

When the leap year came round again this year, a fitting celebration was planned, and the whole Ashram throbbed with a new enthusiasm. Preparations were made on a grand scale. Gold, which is the characteristic colour of the Supermind (the Supramental Purusha is called Hiranmaya Purusha in the Upanishad), waved a smiling welcome from all sides.

On the 14th February last, the Mother had distributed golden frocks to the little girls of the Ashram, and specially woven gold-bordered sarees to ladies, including even those who had come as visitors.

On the 29th, the day began with the balcony darshan. As usual, the Mother appeared on the balcony punctually at 6-15, and gave a quarter-hour meditation to all the Ashramites and the hundreds of visitors, who had come from all over the country,

¹ “ Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man; the mental being cannot by his own unaided force change himself into a Supramental spirit. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle.”—Sri Aurobindo

and even from abroad, to take part in the celebrations. Part of the balcony, where the Mother daily stands for the darshan, was decorated with golden silk.

At 10 o'clock, the Mother played on Her new organ for full half an hour, and Her music was relayed to all parts of the Ashram, wherever people had gathered to listen to it. A perfect, meditative silence reigned during the music, which filled the atmosphere with an unearthly vibration of peace and power fused into light.

The Meditation verandah was draped with golden hangings, and the ceiling of the inner part of it was covered with glowing aluminium sheets and fitted with electric tube lamps. The Mother's rooms upstairs, and all the passages She was likely to pass through, shone with golden carpets and curtains. It was, indeed, a feast of gold, a carnival of gold lights.

In the afternoon from about 2 o'clock, the Ashramites and the visitors started rushing towards the Ashram, anxious to secure a place at the head of the long queue for the Mother's blessings, which were to take place at 4. The queue looked like the huge tail of a python, sweeping the pavements, east and north and south, and spreading far into the streets. At about 3-30, the Mother came down, and within a quarter of an hour, the blessings began. The long queue moved in a single file towards the Meditation verandah. It was a crowd of 2500 people, advancing in a quiet, and concentrated way, as if a solemn hush of profound devotion had suddenly descended upon them. They proceeded, a stream of famished souls, winding its way to the gracious Giver of the heavenly manna. There was a rare blend of calm joy and a pulsing, prayerful intentness in the atmosphere.

Those who are practising the Integral Yoga, and some of those who are intimately connected with the Ashram took special care to approach the Mother in a spirit of inner openness and receptivity, for they knew by experience that the Mother would on that occasion transmit a light or a force to each person according to his or her interior need—an act of Grace which would prove of incalculable value on their spiritual path. Was it not an excep-

tional occasion, the occasion of the anniversary of the great day when, for the first time in the history of the material world, the supramental Light-Force had descended into the earth ?

In the inner verandah, against a background of gold drapery, and clad in an embroidered gold saree, sat the Mother, a dream of Divine Beauty. Love and light flowed out of the deep wells of Her eyes, and a radiant smile of infinite sweetness and compassion played on Her lips, as She gave to each of us a small golden medal embossed with a special design for the occasion. The two dates of 29th February, 1956, and 29th February, 1960, were also embossed on the side of the symbol. Was it not the Magna Charta of the Supramental or Divine Life on earth ?

A few steps ahead, near the Mother's stairs, stood a girl, distributing the Mother's message for the occasion. It was a message written by the Mother on the very day when the Supermind had come down into the earth, in 1956, but it saw the light of day, four years later, on the 29th February, 1960. It runs as follows :

During the common meditation
on Wednesday the 29th February 1956

This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine.

As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that "*the time has come*", and lifting with both hands a mighty golden hammer I struck one blow, one single blow on the door and the door was shattered to pieces.

Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow.

29-2-60

THE MOTHER

The sense of the message is crystal clear. There was a golden door, separating the world from the Divine, *hiranmayena patrena satyasyapihitam mukam*, as it is described in the Upanishad. And on account of this door, the creative Truth-Consciousness and Knowledge-Will of the Divine could not so long be brought down into the earth. Those who aspired for the Divine or the Supreme Reality, renounced the world and tried to escape into the Beyond. But an escape or flight from life is no solution to the problems of life. Life continues, the world continues, as ever, almost unaffected by the *mukti* or *nirvana* of the solitary few. The forces of ignorance, evil, suffering, disorder and discord are left unchallenged in their perennial sway over human nature, and God's Love and Light can hardly pierce into the terrestrial darkness. It is the Supermind alone, the Supermind, which the Veda and the Upanishad call the Creator of the universe, that has the power to eliminate these obscure forces from the very bases of earthly existence, and remould man into the image of the Divine.

Both the Mother and Sri Aurobindo have laboured for long decades of unrelaxed concentration to bring down the Supermind. Sri Aurobindo sacrificed His life in order to be able to hasten the descent of this Supermind. And after His passing, both He and the Mother persisted in their toil till, on the 29th February, 1956, the long-awaited descent took place, carrying in it the authentic pledge and power of the eventual Epiphany.

The "huge and massive door" was shattered to pieces, and the "supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow."

It is the "Hour of God", the "marvellous hour", "when the Spirit moves among men, and the breath of the Lord is upon the waters of our lives". The new age that is dawning bids fair to be greater and more glorious than all the previous *Satyayugas*; for that is how the evolutionary elan fulfils itself. The old values and traditions are crumbling down, so that the Supermind may inaugurate a new order of life and initiate new patterns of human culture. What we are witnessing today in the world is not the

chaos of disruption and disintegration, but the greatest crisis of earthly evolution, the birth-pangs of the supramental age.

The soul of man shall ascend to the infinite Truth-Conscious Supermind, as it has already ascended, in course of its evolution, from Matter to Life, and from Life to Mind. The dividing and doubting human mind cannot be the term of its evolution. If Sachchidananda is involved in matter, the full and complete evolution of Sachchidananda is the inevitable and logical consummation.

The golden door shattered to pieces, there is nothing left now to divide the world from the Divine, nothing to impel a flight from the world. An all-harmonising, dynamic spirituality shall conquer earth by the power of the Supermind, and unite Spirit and Matter, Heaven and Earth, Eternity and Time in a close embrace. Man shall live in God a manifold and creative life, manifesting the glory and greatness of divine perfection. This is the significance of the 29th February, which the Mother has declared as "The Day of the Lord."

RISHABHCHAND

SRI AUROBINDO LITERATURE (VI)

Letters (*contd.*)

Basic requisites

TO take to this yoga, one must first feel the need for it. There should be a *Call* for the higher life. And the call must be genuine, must proceed from the depths of the being. Impulsions from the surfaces of the mental or of the vital personality, either as a result of some dissatisfaction in life or ambition—under whatever camouflage—could never be a sufficient reason. They do not last for long and there comes the inevitable flag, after the initial push is spent out. One must have felt a real need to change the ordinary way of living into a higher. There should be a thirst for the Divine like the fish, in the apt imagery, athirst for water. The demand must be of the soul with a sustained pressure on the mind and the vital to seek and share the change. Again the novice must make sure of the type of spiritual life for which he has affinity. For this Integral Yoga there must be an aspiration in the whole of one's being, not only in the mind and the soul, but in the life-being and the body too, to be reborn in the dynamic truth of the Spirit and to participate in the Divine's manifestation. If the call is only for Mukti, liberation, then there is no need to choose this difficult path of transformation. There are other traditional paths for that purpose.

Next is *sincerity*. And by sincerity is meant a constant readiness and effort to lift up all the parts, all the movements of one's being, in consonance with the truth of one's seeking. It is not enough if the sincerity is there at the centre, in the mind or in the heart. It should spread to all the parts of one's being so that each acts spontaneously on the same basis and for the same aim.

The whole being must be true to the Ideal it has set out to realise. Nothing foreign to that should be allowed to touch, much less express itself in any of its thinkings or doings.

There must be *Faith*, faith in the reality of the Divine, faith in the Path that leads to the Divine, and faith in the Grace that carries one to the Goal. Here too it is not enough if there is only a belief or a certain adherence in the thought i.e. the mind. There is required an entire faith, a dynamic conviction in all the parts of oneself. Sri Aurobindo speaks of four kinds of faith: the mental faith which dispels all doubt and prepares for true knowledge; the vital faith which automatically repels onslaughts of the adverse forces and builds up an effective instrumentation for the divine Will and action; physical faith which sustains the body amidst all its tribulations of suffering, illness and inertia and silently prepares for the reception of the higher consciousness in the material base; and lastly the psychic faith which draws a direct touch of the Divine Influence and leads to a joyous surrender and intimacy with the Divine.

And of course there must be an *aspiration*. The aspiration for the Divine has to be active, growing, setting aflame each centre of the being so that in due course the whole system is one tongue of Agni reaching out to the Heavens Supreme. This aspiration, to be effective, must needs be accompanied by a corresponding will to translate it into action. This conjoint movement manifests itself in the mind as a thirst for and growth into Knowledge, in the vital being as an urge shaping into a dynamic activity in dedication to the Divine, in the heart as a welling up of the emotions, of love and devotion, all in adoration to the Divine. Even the body calls for and yields to a settling calm and peace in its very texture so as to form a firm pedestal for the rising structure.

All this is rendered possible by another means, *surrender*. Surrender is a willed delivering of oneself to another, here the Divine. In this Yoga, starting from a part which most easily tends to so surrender itself, the movement gradually spreads over to the other

parts making them all fall in line, so that the whole of oneself is placed in the hands of the Divine in absolute trust and confidence. This surrender is of two kinds, passive and active. It is active when the individual will is sought to be harmonised and identified with the divine Will at every step—this is what is called consecration—and there is a conscious effort to accept only what is divine and reject what is undivine. It is passive when no will is exercised, but the entire being is kept in a state of readiness to be acted upon by the Divine Will. This latter is more difficult and unless one is very vigilant one gets bogged in tamasic inertia or becomes a plaything of the forces of lower nature.

That brings us to the next requisite, *vigilance*, vigilance to spot out the opposite and wrong currents as they try to enter, to feel the right and upward movements as they set in and to tend them in the proper direction. This is indispensable so long as the sadhana has not been completely taken charge of by the Higher Power and personal effort has its part to play. Once the direction is taken up by the higher Agency, there is an automatic action of the psychic being within replacing the labour of mental vigilance.

For success in any spiritual life, especially in a Yoga as this where one aims to participate in the dynamic manifestation of the Divine, it is essential that the *ego* must be dissolved. Ego is a false front of the real individuality within and unless that is removed the true self cannot come into its own. Human ego has many disguises, many centres of operation and aggrandisement. There is the tamasic ego of wallowing in inertia, weakness and ignorance in a spirit of loud helplessness, a vital or rajasic ego of the sense of one's power and dominion, a sattvic ego of one's superior wisdom and moral righteousness, even a spiritual ego of sainthood. Each and every one of these forms of ego must be exposed and broken. This is a preliminary and yet a fundamental step to be taken before one can be secure on the path. A full recognition of one's limitations, awareness of one's imperfections, and a becoming humility before the Vastness of the Divine that seeks to manifest, are of great help in the elimination

of the ego which is truly a formidable enemy of the soul.

These are the main requisites for sadhana on the part of the individual. His personal effort must base itself and proceed on these lines, for personal effort there has to be in the beginning and up to a long way till the initiative passes from him into the hands of the Guiding Power; even then, a continued state of receptivity and constant assent to its workings by the sadhaka is demanded. All these, however, constitute only one side of the endeavour. For, whatever may be the position in disciplines like the Advaitic or the Buddhist, in this Yoga the main burden rests with the Divine Power to whom an entire surrender is made. It is the Shakti that has first to assent to the sacrifice, the Divine Grace that has to accept and second the effort of the aspirant. That Grace is to be invoked and waited upon. For ultimately it is not the personal exertions of the human will but the uplifting move and the transforming touch of the Divine Grace that carries one over every obstacle and steadily changes the lower nature into the higher. And the Divine Grace is here manifest in the benign Person of the Guru, our Lord Sri Aurobindo and the Blissful Divine Mother who are pouring out in their compassion, streams of Grace in abundance like the sempiternal Indra of the Veda raining the plenteous Waters of Heaven.

There have been disputes among scholars whether it is *tapasyā*, personal effort that achieves or it is really the Grace that effects the result. In Sri Aurobindo's Yoga there is no room for any such doubt. Both are necessary; they are two sides of the working Truth. Divine Grace, surely, but for the Grace to be fully manifest the recipient should be ready. His being has got to be prepared, made pure, supple and sufficiently strong to receive, contain and collaborate with its workings. Otherwise the Breath of Grace will just pass by awaiting its Hour in the future. As the Mother says : "For transformation Grace and aspiration are equally important. Grace comes first but if aspiration does not answer to It no progress is possible."

M. P. PANDIT

THE DIVINE WORKER*

I

ALL human action is an outflow of the energy of consciousness in the individual from the various parts and planes of his being into the universe around him and in response to the multiple challenges from outside. It is therefore conditioned completely by the organisation of the consciousness in the individual and universal Nature. Man in ignorance acts by and large prompted by subconscient impulses, vital feelings and sensations, inchoate emotions of the outer heart and the urges of the vital or the physical mind and he then seems to be not indeed a thinking and conscious being at all even though he might rationalise these irrational motivations but just a cork tossed in the sea of universal movements. We see the beginning of enlightenment when he realises that he should not drift aimlessly and be a puppet in the hands of every chance force from outside or whim of his own nature and tries to govern his life and actions by mental standards of conduct given to him by the best cultured minds of the race — the thinkers, artists and moralists. This way of life ensures a regulation of the energies in his nature and a balance in and a sense of proportion to his conduct. He is dominated now by Sattwa and not by Rajas or Tamas as before. But he perceives sooner or later that this regulation or balance is precarious and the peace or light of mind not at all inviolable. Nature binds him still though with a golden chain. This perception makes him ready to look deep within him and the world and discover that he has left all along out of reckoning the One for whom, in whom and by whom the world and man exist and indeed

* (Sri Aurobindo's sonnet included in 'Last Poems')

considered his life and the world to be fields of gratification of his fantastic and preposterous egoistic desires. So he begins to live and act increasingly in the awareness of God, trying to give up desire in all its forms and to open more and more to the Will of the Lord. Karma Yoga has its beginning here. "We may indeed distinguish three stages of a growing progress by which, first, the personal will is occasionally or frequently enlightened or moved by a supreme Will or conscious Force beyond it, then constantly replaced and, last, identified and merged in that divine Power-action. The first is the stage when we are still governed by the intellect, heart and senses, these have to seek or wait for the divine inspiration and guidance and do not always find or receive it. The second is the stage when human intelligence is more and more replaced by a high illumined or intuitive spiritualised mind, the external human heart by the inner psychic heart, the senses by a purified and selfless vital force. The third is the stage when we rise even above spiritualised mind to the supramental levels".¹ The Sadhaka at this stage is released from all bondage to works and he may seek liberation in the Transcendent and that indeed is the aim of the traditional Karma Yoga—Moksha. But he may elect to stay in the Lila and carry on the evolution, *Lokasaṅgraha*. 'Even in his transcendence of cosmic limitations he is still one with all in God; a divine work remains for him in the universe..² "A divine action arising spontaneously, freely, infallibly from the light and force of our spiritual self in union with the Divine is the last state of this integral Yoga of Works. The truest reason why we must seek liberation is not to be delivered, individually, from the sorrow of the world, though that deliverance too will be given to us, but that we may be one with the Divine, the Supreme, the Eternal. The truest reason why we must seek perfection, a supreme status, purity, knowledge, strength, love, capacity, is not that personally we may enjoy the divine Nature or be even as the gods, though that enjoyment too will be ours, but because this liberation and perfection are the divine Will in us, the highest truth of our self in Nature, the always

intended goal of a progressive manifestation in the universe. The divine Nature, free and perfect and blissful, must be manifested in the individual in order that it may manifest in the world. Even in the Ignorance the individual lives really in the universal and for the universal Purpose, for in the very act of pursuing the purposes and desires of his ego, he is forced by Nature to contribute by his egoistic action to her work and purpose in the world; but it is without conscious intention, imperfectly done, and his contribution is to her half-evolved and half-conscient, her imperfect and crude movement. To escape from ego and be united with the Divine is at once the liberation and the consummation of his individuality; so liberated, purified, perfected, the individual—the divine soul—lives consciously and entirely, as was from the first intended, in and for the cosmic and transcendent Divine and for his Will in the universe.”³ Sri Aurobindo’s sonnet on The Divine Worker, is the song of victory of the Siddha who is a doer of this Divine Work.

II

The Divine Worker does the Divine Work in the Divine Way for he has by conscious union realised identity in nature, likeness to the Divine, *sadharmya*. The Divine acts with a mighty power in the myriad workings of the universe, but with the supporting light and force of an imperturbable oneness, freedom and peace. The supreme divine nature is founded on equality and oneness and so the divine worker declares :

I face earth’s happenings with an equal soul;

This equality is not the mere high-seated indifference of the philosophic mind which has learnt to look at the turmoil of the lower nature and its transactions with the forces of cosmic Nature from an eminence—the position and poise of a passive spectator and disinterested witness of the drama of life. The Worker does

not merely look on but faces the earth's happenings. This is different again from the attitude of stubborn endurance of the stoical will which refuses to be cowed down even while feeling the terrible and almost overpowering gigantic cosmic forces, an achievement of the strength of character steeling itself against and therefore bearing the shocks and the ticklings of the world with serenity. That would be a muzzling or presenting a rigid, unrelenting, unyielding front to external contacts. But the Yogi faces the world with a spiritual poise of absolute certitude in the divine victory, an equal soul and not a mere cultivated will. This has once again to be distinguished from the attitude of the mere man of religion who believes that all happenings on earth are the working out of the Will of God and therefore submits to that Will in a mood of passive resignation, if not active cooperation. Faith has culminated in positive experience. Philosophic serenity, stoical endurance and religious resignation, Udasinata, Titiksha and Nati have been alchemised, sublimated and transcended into the Yogic Samata—the equal soul. To such a soul the events and actions on earth are “happenings” or materialisations or manifestations or fallings out on the scene of the earth of subtle forces of other planes of consciousness whose inmost core is the Divine Shakti. Being free from desire, that enemy of equality, and ‘mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object’,⁴ the soul hears the steps of the Divine Master in all events :

In all are heard Thy steps : Thy unseen feet
Tread Destiny's pathways in my front. Life's whole
Tremendous theorem is Thou complete.

‘God uses the mattock of the labourer and babbles in the mouth of a little child.’⁵ What human intelligence with its limited and finite standards considers high or low, great or small, important or insignificant, momentous or trivial—all have equally and simul-

taneously their origin in the Divine and serve His purpose in the universe. *Aham sarvasya prabhavo, mattah sarvam pravartate.*⁶ Nay, they are only echoes of the Divine steps and the Yogi goes through the paths of life following the Divine Master's lead in front. This world is indeed a field where several determinisms have their play and mutually interact and all the lines of action or possible ways of work open to man are only Destiny's pathways; Man seems to be

“An image fluttering on the screen of fate
Half-animated for a passing show,
Or a castaway on the ocean of Desire
Flung to the eddies in a ruthless sport
And tossed along the gulfs of Circumstance,
A creature born to bend beneath the yoke,
A chattel and a plaything of Time's lords,
Or one more pawn who comes destined to be pushed
One slow move forward on a measureless board
In the chess-play of the earth-soul with Doom,—
Such is the human figure drawn by Time.”

and as for his world :

A gaol is this immense material world.
Across each road stands armed a stone-eyed law,
At every gate the huge dim sentinels pace.
A grey tribunal of the Ignorance,
An Inquisition of the priests of Night
In judgment sit on the adventurer soul,
And the dual tables and the Karmic norm
Restrain the Titan in us and the God :
Pain with its lash, joy with its silver bribe
Guard the Wheel's circling immobility,
A bond is put on the high climbing mind,
A seal on the too large wide-open heart;
Death stays the journeying discoverer, Life.⁷

“There is a horizontal determinism in each domain, absolute in its normal working; but there is also a vertical intervention from other higher domains or even from the highest and then the lower determinism is changed completely. Thus every human being is at once a sum of various determinisms, absolute in their way, and there is also an absolute liberty that can intervene by bringing down other forces into the apparently rigid frame of destiny of the lower worlds and alter it. That is how things in the world give the impression of the unforeseen, the incalculable, the miraculous.”⁸ The Purna Yogi has invoked the Transcendent to prevail in the world and in himself and so he finds the Lord hastening by his secret guidance the evolution in and through Destiny. For “Fate is Truth working out in Ignorance...a transaction done at every hour between Nature and the soul, with God for its foreseeing arbiter.”⁹ And what is Life for, except to prove or manifest the Truth and Nature of the Divine already self-existent in the Transcendent? Life is Chit-Shakti working to realise Complete Sachchidananda in what seems to be its opposite. The Divine as Sachchidananda is the whole theorem of Life, the truth or proposition it is proving or making manifest or realising as true in its consciousness progressively and increasingly. So has Life evolved out of the Inconscient, the material, the vital and the mental and it is pressing to evolve the ranges above the mind—the higher thinking mind, illumined mind, intuition, the overmind and even the supermind and when they are established it would press beyond in an endless progression into the Infinite Sat, Chit and Ananda. What a tremendous theorem is Life proving! “Men see events as unaccomplished, to be striven for and effected. This is a false seeing. Events are not effected, they develop. The event is Brahman, already accomplished from of old, it is now manifesting.”¹⁰ “Our life on this earth is a divine poem that we are translating into earthly language or a strain of music which we are rendering into words.”¹¹ The theorem inspires greater awe and makes the human consciousness tremble when we realise that the Purna Brahman

(Complete Sachchidananda) remains before, during and after manifestation the same Purna always !

*Pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṁ pūrṇāt pūrṇamudacyate
Pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate*

“This is the complete and That is the complete; subtract the complete from the complete, the complete is the remainder.”¹² There has arisen in the enlarged consciousness of the Yogi the supramental way of knowledge, the vision of Life’s whole theorem. For only “the supramental eye can see a hundred meeting and diverging motions in one glance and envelop in the largeness of its harmonising vision of Truth all that to our minds is clash and opposition and the collision and interlocked strife of numberless contending truths and powers. Truth to the supramental sight is at once single and infinite and the complexities of its play serve to bring out with an abundant ease the rich significance of the Eternal’s many-sided oneness.”¹³

III

This supramental knowledge by identity, of Life, Destiny and the Divine has permeated and transformed all the members of the psychological being—the mental, vital and physical parts collectively spoken of here as spirit—of the Yogi. They have also established in themselves the equality of the soul. We find here the “four things that he must have; first, equality in the most concrete practical sense of the word, *sāmatā*, freedom from mental, vital, physical preferences, an even acceptance of all God’s workings within and around him; secondly, a firm peace and absence of all disturbance and trouble, *śānti*; thirdly, a positive inner spiritual happiness and spiritual ease of the natural being which nothing can lessen, *sukham*; fourthly, a clear joy and laughter of the soul embracing life and existence.”¹⁴ The Shanti of the higher realms has settled so firmly and permanently that it cannot

be shaken by the most violent and turbulent conditions of uncertainty and insecurity—danger :

No danger can perturb my spirit's calm :

My acts are Thine; I do Thy works and pass;

Failure is cradled on Thy deathless arm,

Victory is Thy passage mirrored in Fortune's glass.

This is the condition of complete desirelessness, selflessness and surrender when all personal egoistic initiation of action has been renounced, *sarvārambhaparityāga* and there is no longer any action for oneself, *tasya kāryam na vidyate*.¹⁵ All the movements of all the faculties of the Yogi, his acts, are the impulsions of the Divine Will and every series or group of such acts directed to an end to be achieved in the world outside or inside is again for and of the Divine Lila. These works do not leave any residue in the being of the worker, of being ill done, well done or half done or undone, for the energy sent in through the channel has gone forth into the field spontaneously without any distortion and for the end willed by the Maker. There is no need for brooding over the action executed or imaginative projections on the basis of the results achieved or expected. The whole being and energies of the Yogi are concentrated on the work only, in the present and eternal Now, *Karmanyeva adhikārah, mā phaleshu kadācana*.¹⁶ Without any attachment he passes on from work to work of the Divine Master. His illumined psychic vision "follows the many-sided freedom of the steps of the Divine Shakti. He is not bewildered by the swift alteration of her many different personalities, her making of rhythms and her breaking of rhythms, her accelerations of speed and her retardations, her varied ways of dealing with the problem of one and another, her taking up and dropping now of this line and now of that one and her gathering of them together and he recognises the way of the Supreme Power when it is circling and sweeping upwards through the maze of the Ignorance to a supernal Light."¹⁷ "God alone knows when

and how to blunder wisely and fail effectively. Defeat is not the end, it is only a gate or a beginning. One should not say that one has failed. One should say rather that God is circling about towards His object.”¹⁸ Failure is nurtured safe in the immortal arm of God and he will use it for His purpose. Victory is a manifestation of the Power of God producing immediately the intended result in circumstances which are ripe and have been made ripe by the Divine—His passage mirrored in Fortune’s glass. The Divine Shakti works always with an unerring wisdom through failure, the state of preparation of the field, and victory, the ripe condition of fulfilment. This way of looking at the results of actions frees the Yogi of the otherwise inevitable taint and fever of all action with its ordeal of failure and the still greater ordeal of success. *Na karma lipyate nare.*¹⁹

IV

So the individual centre and his instruments, the soul and the spirit are ready for the battle of life and the divine soldier awaits the mandate of the Divine Commander :

In this rude combat with the fate of man

Thy smile within my heart makes all my strength;

Thy Force in me labours at its grandiose plan,

Indifferent to the Time-snake’s crawling length.

“The Divine Shakti is dealing with the Ignorance in the fields of the Ignorance; she has descended there and is not all above. Partly she veils and partly she unveils her knowledge and her power, often holds them back from her instruments and personalities and follows that she may transform them the way of the seeking mind, the way of the aspiring psychic, the way of the battling vital, the way of the imprisoned and suffering physical nature. There are conditions that have been laid down by a Supreme

Will, there are many tangled knots that have to be loosened and cannot be cut abruptly asunder. The Asura and Rakshasa hold this evolving earthly nature and have to be met and conquered on their own terms in their own long-conquered fief and province; the human in us has to be led and prepared to transcend its limits and is too weak and obscure to be lifted up suddenly to a form far beyond it.”²⁰ The human soul is ‘an intruder in Nature’s ignorance, an armed traveller to the unseen supernal heights’, and the spirit’s fate is...

“...a battle and ceaseless march
 Against invisible opponent Powers,
 A passage from Matter into timeless Self.
 Adventurer through blind unforeseeing Time,
 A forced advance through a long line of lives,
 It pushes its spearhead through the centuries.
 Across the dust and mire of the earthly plain,
 On many-guarded lines and dangerous fronts,
 In dire assaults, in wounded slow retreats,
 Or holding the ideal’s battered fort
 Or fighting against odds in lonely posts,
 Or camped in night around the bivouac’s fires
 Awaiting the tardy trumpets of the dawn,
 In hunger and in plenty and in pain,
 Through peril and through triumph and through fall,
 Through life’s green lanes and over her desert sands,
 Up the bald moor, along the sunlit ridge
 In serried columns with a straggling rear
 Led by its nomad vanguard’s signal fires,
 Marches the army of the waylost god.”²¹

In this field of the war with many determinisms there is no room for weak human feelings of pity or tenderness or even the sattvic emotions. Nature is amoral in its operations and Supernature supermoral in Her strategies. And so the Divine Work presents

the spectacle of a rude combat with fate. But the Mother is not only Kali but also and simultaneously Durga. Behind her 'overwhelming intensity, mighty passion of force to achieve, divine violence rushing to shatter every limit and obstacle', we find her "graceful and charming, her tenderness flowing out from her like light from the sun and wherever she fixes her wonderful gaze or lets fall the loveliness of her smile, the soul being seized and made captive and plunged into the depths of an unfathomable bliss". ²² *Citte kṛpā śamaraniṣṭhuratā ca.* ²³ The Divine Worker feels this smile of absolute certitude, victory, composure and benignant Grace within his heart and this is his armour and weapon in the mighty cataclysmic fight with the python coils of the Inconscient.

Thy smile within my heart makes all my strength ;

"All is done by the Shakti. It is her power of knowledge which takes shape as thought in the mind; the sadhaka has no sense of himself thinking, but of the Shakti thinking in him. The will and the feelings and action are also in the same way nothing but a formation, operation, activity of the Shakti in her immediate presence and full possession of all the system. The sadhaka does not think, will, act, feel, but thought, will, feeling, action happen in his system. The individual on the side of action has disappeared into oneness with the universal Prakriti, has become an individualised form and action of the divine Shakti. He is still aware of his personal existence, but it is as the Purusha supporting and observing the whole action, conscious of it in his self-knowledge and enabling by his participation the divine Shakti to do in him the works and the will of the Ishwara." ²⁴ And her work is an eternity of toil to fulfil her multidimensional, magnificent and intricate plan, *kṛitsna karma*. It is

"to build a rainbow bridge
Marrying the soil to the sky

And sow in this dancing planet midge
The moods of infinity,"

so that

"the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright." ²⁵

There is a plan in the Mother's deep world-whim,
A purpose in her vast and random game.
This ever she meant since the first dawn of life,
This constant will she covered with her sport,
To evoke a person in the impersonal Void,
With the Truth-Light strike earth's massive roots of
trance,

Wake a dumb self in the inconscient depths
And raise a lost power from its python sleep
That the eyes of the Timeless might look out from Time
And the world manifest the unveiled Divine. ²⁶

And this She works out having eternity before her with an endless patience, in Time with its 'tardy coilings of the aeons' ²⁷ and in "an universe with its infinite number of points moving, each forming a spiral, and these spirals not only lying side by side, but crossing each other and thus giving an aspect of contrariness and contradictoriness, with so many lines that advance and so many which recede at the same time, some coming into the light, others going into the background and none independent or self-sufficient, yet with a sort of intermingling, even coordination."²⁸

Thy Force in me labours at its grandiose plan,
Indifferent to the Time-snake's crawling length.

V

So the Divine Worker has realised a state of dynamic identification of consciousness with the Purushottama and Paraprakriti. He hears His steps, feels the unseen Feet treading in his front, sees His deathless arm and passage in the field of action, basks in His smile within his heart and experiences the Divine Shakti moving him. He is a power of being of the Divine and what power can slay his soul ? He lives, moves and has his being in the Divine, '*nivasiṣyasi mayyeva*',²⁹ and the eternal presence of the Divine in whom he has entered, '*viśate tadanantaram*',³⁰ is the immortal habitation and life of his soul and spirit.

No power can slay my soul; it lives in Thee.
Thy presence is my immortality.

The sadhaka is constantly and uninterruptedly aware of the play of the Shakti with the Ishwara, Mahadeva and Kali, Krishna and Radha, the Deva and the Devi. The Lord is felt in him as the possessor of his being and above him as the ruler of all its workings and they become to him nothing but a manifestation of Him in the existence of the Jiva. All his consciousness is His consciousness, all his knowledge is His knowledge, all his thought is His thought, all his will is His will, all his feeling is the Ananda and form of His delight in being, all his action is His action. There is only the conscious activity in him of the Divine with the great self of the Divine behind and around and possessing it; all the world and Nature is seen to be only that, but here it has become fully conscious, the Maya of the ego removed, and the Jiva is there only as an eternal portion of his being, '*aṁśaḥ sanātana*', put forth to support a divine individualisation and living now fulfilled in the complete presence and power of the Divine, the complete joy of the Spirit manifested in the being. This is the highest realisation of the perfection and delight of the active oneness; for beyond it there could be only the consciousness of the Avatara,

the Ishwara himself assuming a human name and form for action in the Lila."³¹

1. *The Synthesis of Yoga* (International Centre Edition), Pages 250--251.
2. *Ibid.*, Page 310.
3. *Ibid.*, Pp. 315-316.
4. *Isha Upanishad* : Sri Aurobindo's Commentary : Page 23.
5. *Thoughts and Glimpses*—Page 28.
6. *Bhagavat Gita*—Ch. 10—Verse 8.
7. *Savitri*—International Centre Edition—Bk. I—Canto 2, Pages 21-22.
8. The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo—Part VII—Page 24.
9. *Savitri*—International Centre Edition—Bk. 6—Canto 2, Page 519.
10. *Thoughts and Aphorisms*—Page 51.
11. *The Hour of God*—Page 43
12. *Shantisloka of Isha Upanishad* : Sri Aurobindo's translation in *The Life Divine* (International Centre Edition, Page 402.)
13. *The Hour of God*—Page 84.
14. *The Synthesis of Yoga*—International Centre Edition, Page, 826.
15. *Bhagavat Gita*—Ch. 3—Verse 17.
16. *Ibid.*—Ch. 2—Verse 47.
17. Cf. *The Mother*—Pages 83-84.
18. Cf. *Thoughts and Aphorisms* : Pages 49 and 42.
19. *Isha Upanishad*—Verse 2.
20. *The Mother*—1946 Edition—Pages 85-87.
21. *Savitri*—International Centre Edition—Bk. 6—Canto 2—Pages 519-20.
22. Cf. *The Mother*—1946 Edition—Pages 57, 64 and 65.
23. *Devi Mahatmya*—Ch. 4, verse 22.
24. *The Synthesis of Yoga*—International Centre Edition—Page 879.

25. *Poems Past and Present*—Pages 5 and 10.
26. *Savitri*—International Centre Edition—Bk 1—Canto 4—
Page 83.
27. *Ibid.*—Bk 1—Canto 2—Page 22.
28. *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*—Part VII—Page 9.
29. *Bhavagat Gita*—Ch.12—Verse 8
30. *Ibid.*—Ch. 18—Verse 55.
31. *The Synthesis of Yoga*—International Centre Edition—
Pages 879-880.

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE IDEAL OF THE WHOLE MAN*

I BELIEVE that Sri Aurobindo's life as a spiritual teacher falls into two main aspects. In the first we see him transmitting an immense body of thought and instruction on the nature and destiny of man and the universe, at the core of which lies his conception of the potential divinity of man, expressing itself in a certain kind of wholeness, through a divine life on earth. In the second aspect, we see him engaged in the task of living what he taught and teaching others how to live it. So that in a general way, we can say his life was characterised by this intimate interrelation of theory with practice. Indeed, as he said of himself, he had tested his methods day and night for years "more scrupulously than any scientist."

When your Secretary so kindly asked me to come and speak to you about Sri Aurobindo, I chose the title of my talk, not only because the conception of the whole man is central to his thought and teaching and has a very particular connotation of its own, but because it also ties up with a search that is much in the forefront in these times.

This search, of course, underlies the intense modern pre-occupation with psychology—and the attraction for various Eastern teachings, such as Zen Buddhism, with their acute and subtle insight into man's nature. It is also apparent in many of the more serious books being published, with their accent upon man's spiritual odyssey. On another level, the effort to link up this search for wholeness and the reality of a spiritual order in the universe, with the findings of science, is apparent in such diverse

* Address given to the Cambridge Branch of the World Congress of Faiths

'books as "Neti Neti" by L.Becket ; "The Biology of the Spirit" by Edmund Sinnot ; De La Warr's "New Worlds Beyond the Atom" and "The Physics of the Primary State of Matter" by Cyril Davson. And you could probably mention many more. Indeed, we might almost say that the most salient emerging characteristic of our times is the search for a basis of harmony—harmony in the psyche, in personal relations, harmony between religious insight and the sciences, harmony between nations.

This synthesis is the great task of the New Age, and naturally, in Sri Aurobindo's view, the battle for it must begin in the psyche. "A divine life," he says, "must be first and foremost an inner life: for since the outward must be the expression of what is within, there can be no divinity in the outer existence if there is not the divinization of the inner being."

I have said that the idea of wholeness, both in its relation to man and to man's conception of the cosmos, underlies all Sri Aurbindo's teaching. But just as he claims that his Yoga begins where all others end, so this idea of wholeness is more radical, more sweeping in its demands and more profound in its implications.

Perhaps it is easier to say what it is *not*, rather than to define what it *is*. It is not, I think, to be confused with such things as Jung's process of individuation; or with what P.W.Martin called "the experience of the More" in his book "Experiment in Depth," though these processes enter into it. And in so far as it is possible to make comparisons at such a level, I do not think that the ideal of wholeness, as it is realised in Sri Aurobindo's term "the gnostic Person", is comprehended by what Zen calls *satori*—that flash of insight in which man spontaneously realises his identity with the Whole, or his "original inseparability." Certainly, this realisation is the base on which Sri Aurobindo's spiritual system is built. The first necessity, he says, is "that the individual, each individual, shall discover the spirit, the divine reality within him and express that in all his being and living." This is the foundation of wholeness, but though it may have a profoundly inte-

grating and liberating effect on the being, it is only a beginning.

Thus a modern commentator on Zen can describe those who have experienced satori as being "ordinary and nothing special" and "just like us"; indeed, so much like us, that they may still be subject to temper. Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, remarks : "My own ideal is transformation of the outer nature, perfection as perfect as it can be," though he is careful to add : "But you cannot say that those who have not achieved it or did not care to achieve it had no spirituality."

What does Sri Aurobindo mean when he says : "My own ideal...is perfection as perfect as it can be ?" What exactly is this wholeness that seems so much more comprehensive than other spiritual ideals ? I think this question can be answered quite simply. Where other ideals are content with a wholeness, or a widening of consciousness, upon only one level of man's being, Sri Aurobindo is not. But in order to understand *why* he is not, we must first take a brief look at the metaphysical basis of his thought.

Sri Aurobindo's metaphysical reasoning is based on the Vedantic affirmation "All that is, is God : beside him nothing else exists." He is the basis and support of all creation, immanent in both inorganic and organic life. As Transcendent Divine He exceeds all that we can attribute to Him, in His pure and absolute Existence being beyond anything we can imagine, or conceive, through His manifested or unmanifested Existence. The qualities of this Supreme Being, as defined in Indian thought, are Consciousness, Force, Bliss. In creation He is—as the Gita says—"indivisible, but as if divided in beings," or, as the Upanishads affirm "the Many are the One."

Man, by his plunge into material existence, has lost this knowledge of his divine origin, and with it the sense of unity with all things. He imagines himself as separate, in a world of separate beings, and from this fundamental error spring all those things which divide him from the wholeness and harmony which, obscurely, he seeks to re-discover.

As a result of the sense of inadequacy which comes from the conviction of being an isolated and unrelated unit, the world ceases to be an expression of his deepest life, as intimate a part of him as his own body, to be loved and cherished equally. Instead, it confronts him as a hostile, frightening and unknown 'other', to be aggressively subdued, if he is not to be overwhelmed by it. Holding out to him at the same time enormous promises of gain and satisfaction, it is filled with other beings like himself, all bent on a competitive struggle to wrest what they can from life. Through the ages, in civilized communities, moral and social restraints have gradually come to be placed on this greed, but in some form or another the craving to "add something to ourselves" is basic to mental life and forms the incentive of all our striving.

This craving, or desire, springs therefore directly from man's sense of separateness and the feeling of insufficiency which is linked with it. It expresses itself both in aversion and attraction; in a desire to avoid what is unpleasant, or a desire to acquire what is pleasant. He is in the divided world of the dualities—the world of what Jung has called "the opposites". And just as the external world is a world in the clash of the opposites, so is his own inner world torn asunder in the same way. As he advances to a moral level, he sees much in himself that pains him, that conflicts with his idea of what is good and right. When it issues in destructive thought or action, he calls it sin. Very soon, if he is not careful, a chasm opens between his idea of his good and bad self which he cannot close. So we have, in Mr. Alan Watts, words, a culture (at least in the West) "in which the spiritual and material, the conscious and unconscious, have been cataclysmically split."

This view of ourselves—and of the external world—as split into two opposed principles, is, says Sri Aurobindo, an illusion. It is the result of wrong-seeing, a wrong-seeing based on the loss of knowledge of our union with "all that is." Before we can begin to achieve wholeness we must correct this fundamental error of vision. We must learn, as Buddhism would say, "to see

things as they are." But this "seeing things as they are" is not an intellectual thing. It is not having the correct opinions about the nature of Reality. Indeed, the very intensity with which we hold this conviction of separateness, and perpetuate its dual way of seeing ourselves and the world in all our thinking and doing, comes directly from our imprisonment in what Sri Aurobindo calls the mental principle.

The type of consciousness which characterises this principle, is, in his view, wholly incapable *by itself* of "seeing things as they are." Only when we have healed the split in our own nature, which divorces us from true seeing, can we move beyond Mind into a consciousness which far exceeds, while it embraces, it.

It will be readily understood then, that in all systems of Yoga, the indispensable step to liberation into a greater spiritual consciousness is the knowledge—knowledge, that is, as a fact of direct experience—that God is not only "all that is", but our own highest Self. "Only to those who can say 'I am the Light, Thyself, shall it be answered : 'Enter, for what I am thou art, and what thou art I am.'"

Upon this realisation any spiritual 'making whole' is founded. It is the condition which enables us to unite within us the two hemispheres of Matter and Spirit, Nature and Soul, which our sense of separateness has sundered, so that they interplay as harmoniously as night and day. And just as we see that Spirit and Matter are not opposite principles, but relations of difference of the One Reality, so we see that God and Soul as subject and object transfigures itself into the Soul as the individual poise of the Divine in the cosmos. But though this union, in the view of many spiritual teachings, represents the apotheosis of wholeness attainable by the aspirant, to Sri Aurobindo it is only the beginning. It may transform certain levels of the individual, but not all, and this, to him, is incompleteness.

Before we go into the nature of this completeness, let us look for a moment at Sri Aurobindo's second most important contention.

Creation, he says, is a movement of ascent and descent, "a movement between two involutions, Spirit in which all is involved and out of which all evolves downward to the other pole of Matter, Matter in which also all is involved and out of which all evolves upwards to the other pole of Spirit." Evolution, therefore, as Sri Aurobindo sees it, is an unfolding of all the divine potentialities inherent in Matter. In every stage of evolution, the Divine Consciousness has laboured to find, and express itself through, higher and more perfect instruments. The first great emergence took place with the appearance of organic life; secondly, with that of vital or animal life; the third with man, who has been able to embody in Mind the highest level to which consciousness has yet attained.

The whole labour of creation, first in the plant, then in the animal and finally in man, he saw "as a progressive series for the unfolding of the Spirit," and one of "supreme significance." But Mind is not the final flowering of Consciousness. A further ascent lies before man, which, if he can attain it, will enable him to embody far greater powers than are available to him at present through a purely mental consciousness.

For Mind, says Sri Aurobindo, is a partial working of consciousness. It is the centre of what he calls 'the Ignorance' and of our sense of separateness particularly, because, though Mind can know about the properties of the things it scrutinises, it cannot know their essence. It can, he says, "only know by separation and distinction and has at the most a vague and secondary apprehension of unity and infinity—for though it can synthetise its divisions, it cannot arrive at a true totality."

Indeed, until man can embody an extension of consciousness beyond the mental principle, he will be unable to solve the dilemmas that face him, for these, as we have seen already, are all problems of harmony, for which, by the very nature of its operation, Mind cannot find the resolving vision. Sri Aurobindo maintains that it is only by rising into a principle of consciousness, where, through our common origin, we are in an indivisible relationship with

that Reality in which the creative process is conceived, and from whose formative powers it is shaped, that we can *know* with an absolute truth of knowledge.

This kind of knowledge Sri Aurobindo defines as *knowledge by identity*. The principle of consciousness where this knowledge is available—its matrix—he calls the Truth-Consciousness or Supramental. This Truth-Consciousness is not the absolute self-existence of the Supreme Being, but it is the operation of His self-ordering in the universe, an intermediate functioning of consciousness between Pure Being and the inferior functioning of consciousness represented by Mind.

If man could return to this source of knowledge to which unity and harmony are native, he would not only understand the mysteries of existence, he would bring into life a power capable of transforming it at root. To live and act from this divine principle would represent a step forward in evolution of the greatest magnitude. Until it is achieved, Sri Aurobindo believed, man cannot fulfil his real destiny of a divine life on earth.

Such a goal holds out a challenge to which only the man who is 'whole' in a very special sense can respond. It rejects all partial aims. It will not tolerate escape from the world as a condition of spirituality. The notion of a perfection and salvation only possible in the hereafter is entirely foreign to its aims. A sanctity bought at the cost of a negation of life is its very antithesis. It is affirmative and life-embracing. It drives no wedges between sacred and secular, religious and profane. The perfection of some part of the individual, which will give access to the Divine, is the ideal beyond which the great classical Yoga systems (with one exception) do not strive. In each one of these systems, one part of the being is seized upon—intellect, life and body, heart, the emotional and sensational life—and made the channel of approach to the Divine. But the perfection of the individual *in all his aspects* is only a preliminary, in Sri Aurobindo's teaching, to the transformation of life.

We may well ask, Yes, but is life really capable of transformation? Isn't it really a hideous botch of physical suffering and

moral squalor from which the spiritual man can only withdraw, and which he can never hope to change ? No, Sri Aurobindo returns. "The earth is the foundation and all the worlds are upon the earth." All life is One. Because in its essence it is divine, all life is therefore capable of transformation. So, writing of his own ideal, he says : "Its aim is to work out the will of the Divine in the world, to effect a spiritual transformation and to bring down a divine nature and a divine life into the mental, vital and physical nature and life of humanity."

We may well ask, what kind of an effort does this demand of us ? An effort in the height and in the depth, Sri Aurobindo replies. The most sustained, difficult, patient and arduous effort of which you are capable, for it demands nothing less than the total transformation of your being. In fact, he writes of the spiritual change which Yoga demands of human nature as being "the most difficult of all human aspirations and efforts." Those who would find it, must first lose the life of the lower self, and that is the most complex and difficult task any man can undertake.

Because of this dual aim, the transformation of the individual as well as of existence, no part of the individual can be allowed to escape being gathered into the total regeneration. So there must be a total offering, a total perfection—mind, heart, body. Sri Aurobindo insists over and over again on this necessity of an integral development of people, just as he insists on an offering of all the gifts to life, whether they are of the arts or of the sciences, or simply concern a dedicated action of the daily chores of life.

In a noble passage he writes : "All activities of knowledge that seek after or express Truth are in themselves rightful materials for a complete offering; none ought necessarily to be excluded from the wide framework of the divine life. The mental and physical sciences which examine into the laws and forms and processes of things, those which concern the life of men and animals, the social, political, linguistic and historical and those which seek to know and control the labours and activities by which man subdues and utilizes his world and environment, and

the noble and beautiful Arts which are at once work and knowledge—for every well-made and significant poem, picture, statue or building is an act of creative knowledge, a living discovery of the consciousness, a figure of Truth, a dynamic form of the mental and vital self-expression or world-expression—all that seeks, all that finds, all that voices or figures is a realization of something of the play of the Infinite and to that extent can be made a means of God-realisation or of divine formation. But the Yogin has to see that it is no longer done as part of an ignorant mental life; it can be accepted by him only if by the feeling, the remembrance, the dedication within it, it is turned into a movement of the spiritual consciousness and becomes a part of its vast grasp of comprehensive illuminating knowledge.”

I hope you will see by all this, that Sri Aurobindo means by wholeness, not simply what Jesus (I think) meant when he opposed wholeness with sickness—‘They that are whole need not a physician, but those that are sick.’ He means by it *totality of being*. The fullest possible realisation of what we are potentially.

Let us go back for a moment and look at man as we left him at the beginning, struggling with the dualities and dogged by a conviction of his separateness—a creature lost in the thickets of the Ignorance who has not yet found the inner light which will light him through its dark labyrinths. As we saw, by his descent into material existence, he has lost the knowledge of his oneness with all that is, not only in the inward world of his own being, but outwardly. Spirit and Nature have become, not poles of that being, the positive and negative of the creative current, but principles in opposition. Because he looks outward upon the world through the doors of the senses, he is captive to the whole range of sensations brought to him by them, whether of thought—for the Indians designate Mind as the sixth sense—or of emotion and vital feeling, and Nature rules him as she will through them.

Naturally, the first step towards wholeness enjoined by Sri Aurobindo, is that the individual should break his sense of identity with the varying mind, life and body Nature has given him, for

only by so doing can he find his true Self, or, as we should call it in the West, Spirit : that Self where, as the Gita says, "he sees himself in the heart of all beings and...all beings in his heart." There he recovers that sense of union with God, for there he is one with Him, and with all other beings, that he lost by his descent into the material world.

At this point the primordial split is healed. Spirit and Nature, heaven and earth, those divine hemispheres, have consummated their union in his soul and become once more the Celestial Sphere. Of this creative miracle, which is both mysteriously outside and inside ourselves, the Upanishad says : "There is a Light that shines beyond all things on earth, beyond us all, beyond the heavens, beyond the highest, the very highest heavens. This is the Light that shines in our heart."

But this realisation, the crown of most Yogas, is only a beginning for Sri Aurobindo. "Realisation by itself," he writes, "does not necessarily transform the being *as a whole*." And by transformation he means "a change of consciousness radical and complete and of a certain specific kind." Because his Yoga takes "fulfilment of the life and body for its object," and the whole nexus of mind, life and body for the field of the divine action, each of these powers must be totally renewed—"born again from above," in Jesus' words.

Perhaps this passage from Sri Aurobindo's great treatise *On Yoga* will give you some idea of the synthetic quality of the spirituality at which he aims. "Let us not be in too furious a haste to acquire peace, purity and perfection," he writes. "Peace must be ours, but not the peace of an empty or devastated nature or of slain or mutilated capacities incapable of unrest because we have made them incapable of intensity and fire and force. Purity must be our aim, but not the purity of a void or of a bleak and rigid coldness. Perfection is demanded of us, but not the perfection that can exist only by confining its scope within narrow limits or putting an arbitrary full stop to the ever self-extending scrolls of the Infinite....It is easier to starve the ego by renouncing

the impulse to act or to kill it by cutting away from us all the movement of personality. It is easier to exalt it into self-forgetfulness immersed in a trance of peace or an ecstasy of divine Love. But our more difficult problem is to liberate the true Person and attain to a divine manhood which shall be the pure vessel of a divine force and the perfect instrument of a divine action."

Again, of this wholeness he says : "The spiritual or supramental Self...must be alone the Lord within us and shape freely our final development according to the highest, widest, most integral expression possible of the law of our nature." The liberated individual who has attained this wholeness, or completeness of being, he calls "the Gnostic Person," and he describes his nature as "an infinite and universal being revealing—or, to our mental ignorance suggesting—its eternal self through the significant form and expressive power of an individual and temporal Self-manifestation." In a community of such beings, he adds, "difference would not lead to a discord but to a spontaneous natural adaptaion, a sense of complementary plenitude, a rich many-sided execution of the thing to be collectively known, done, worked out in life."

Now it is obvious that this fully-extended aim of spiritual becoming, simply from its completeness, must be more exacting than those which, though they may aim at the Heights, do so with a narrower approach. Sri Aurobindo aims at the Heights, not in order for the individual to stay there in a solitary trance of self-absorbed bliss in the Infinite, but in order to descend once more to earth, and gather all life into the Light so that it may express the divine Delight of existence.

Because we are intimately linked on every level of our being with the cosmos of which we are a part, every effort to embody the plenitude of the powers of mind, life and body which only partially manifest in us, must raise up against us all the powers of the Ignorance which dominate life.

Such an effort of self-exceeding can only be made under the guidance of a Teacher who has himself trodden the Way and

achieved liberation. This process of spiritual 'making whole' is called in India *sadhana*, meaning a method or system of Yoga—Yoga meaning union with the Divine. The Yoga evolved, and taught, by Sri Aurobindo he called Purna, or Integral Yoga, because it demands "a turning of the being in all its parts to the Divine."

Those who enter on this Way must be well-founded in the discipline of the moral life. For we cannot proceed to the XYZ of the spiritual life before we have learnt its ABC. To Indian spiritual thought the highest moral life is still subject to the dualities, because it is bound by the ideas of sin and virtue. But this does not mean that man must not grow first through the moral life before he comes to Yoga.

We do not find Sri Aurobindo talking in terms of sin and virtue, because, to him, these distinctions belong to the religious and not to the spiritual life. He prefers to talk about imperfections as wrong movements—things that have got to be put right in the machinery of human nature. He knows well the existence of that "twin Personae, bright and dark" which is in every individual; but he knows that it is the outcome of a psyche that has been split apart because it has lost its unifying vision.

And if much of the early stages of Yoga seem a struggle to reject the domination of the dark personae—the ego, as Sri Aurobindo calls it—it is only part of a greater struggle to liberate the bright personae, the soul, so that it shall truly "see things as they are", in the Buddhist phrase. Then, when the soul is no longer under the domination of Nature but cooperating with her harmoniously, she will begin to shed her Light over the whole field of our being and endeavour so that we no longer see darkly, through the distorting glass of the ego.

But, as in Integral Yoga, all the powers of the being are to be utilised, the surrender of the mind to this clear seeing will use knowledge as its means of transformation; the surrender of the life, works, and the surrender of the heart, love. This triple offer-

ing of knowledge, works and love, in union, forms the mainstay of the Yoga. "It is not only the heart that has to turn to the Divine and change," says Sri Aurobindo, "but the mind also—so knowledge is necessary and the will and power of action and creation also—so works too are necessary."

As we labour at that work of inner observation and detachment which will one day enable us to see ourselves "as we are", we come gradually to realise we are not this complex of mind, life and body with which we had always identified ourselves. The doer of all our actions is not, as we had thought, ourselves, but the Divine Himself. He it is who now works in us directly, through the power of the soul, instead of indirectly through the determinism of Nature and the distorted reflections of the ego. In time that "Light that shines in our hearts" as the Upanishad calls it, will take up all the powers of our being—mind, life and body and make them the divine instruments which latently they are.

One who has reached this state is 'whole' or, as Sri Aurobindo would say, complete. "He is not governed by the judgements of men or the laws laid down by the ignorant," he writes, "he obeys an inner voice and is moved by an unseen Power. His real life is within and this is its description that he lives, moves and acts in God, in the Divine, in the Infinite."

To most of us such an attainment must seem as remote as the peaks of the Himalayas. We do not even seem among the foothills. We are still journeying across the dusts of the plain. Shall we allow ourselves to be discouraged by the magnitude of the journey? Certainly not. "The journey of a hundred miles begins here," says a Zen Master. And Sri Aurobindo adds "It is not necessary and indeed it is not possible for all to measure the whole journey in a single life. It is enough for us to make a beginning."

Those are heartening words. For whether we are ready for it or not, sometime, in this life or another, as irrevocably as a flower unfolds in the spring, the inmost law of our being will

drive us to seek for that wholeness which we potentially contain as surely as the seed contains the flower. "To become complete in being," says Sri Aurobindo, "in consciousness of being, in force of being, in delight of being and to live in this integrated completeness is the divine living."

The quest for that divine living lies at the root of all man's seeking for a better life. Nothing else, we can be certain, will fulfil the needs of the divine being in him, Nothing *less* can satisfy his deepest conception of what true wholeness demands of him.

MORWENNA DONNELLEY

KAYA SIDDHI

OR

PERFECTION OF THE BODY

RECENTLY we had occasion to go through a biography of Tapasviji Maharaj, a remarkable yogin who lived for 185 years, by a member of the Mysore Judiciary. Tapasviji came of a princely family in Patiala State and was born in 1770. He had attended the Durbar of Bahadur Shah, the last emperor of the Moghuls. As a result of a rapid inner movement he took to *sannyās* in his 55th year and began a life of hard austerities. He lived in caves, on hill-tops, moved in impenetrable forests in the Himalayas, met interesting personalities and altogether had a most varied, adventurous life. Somewhere about the age when he had grown too old—we do not remember the exact age, perhaps it was seventy or so—and the limbs of the body were failing, he had the good fortune to meet a Guru who offered to rejuvenate him so that he could pursue his sadhana. The Guru had great knowledge of the properties of herbs and he treated Tapasviji to a seven weeks' course of herbal treatment in a solitary place in dark chamber. Continuous attendance was necessary and the Guru took inordinate pains. During the course of the treatment the old teeth, nails, hair etc. withered away. After some time new ones grew and at the end of the period the patient came out a robust, young and buoyant man with all the faculties in fresh condition. Feelingly he asked the Guru how he could repay his debt of gratitude. The latter replied that his own body could be given the same *kāya kalpa* (treatment of the body) by the disciple in the same way. Tapasviji, needless to say, readily agreed and took every care to bring the treatment to a successful close. Twice

more during the course of his life, Tapasviji underwent this course of rējuvenation and continued his life of spiritual ministration and *tapasyā* till he passed away in 1955 at the age of 185. Tapasviji, it may be mentioned, is the same yogin who conducted the Kaya-Kalpa treatment for Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1938, though for various reasons, it was not very successful.

What is Kaya Kalpa ? What precisely is its aim ? How does it work ? These are the natural queries that arise in a normally curious mind but authentic information on the subject is not easily accessible, entombed as it is in the ancient treatises on Ayurveda in Sanskrit and in palm-leaf manuscripts relating to *Rasa-śāstra* and the lore of the Siddhars. A recent book on the subject by Swami Shivananda, however, throws helpful light on the matter.¹

Indian scriptures, says the author, speak of three ways of maintaining good health and prolonging life : *yoga*, *mantra*, *auśadha* (medicine). Of these this book treats only of the different varieties of medical treatment. The main principle on which this approach is based is this : the body is made up of a number of cells. These cells are constantly being broken down and renewed. Man starts aging when these cells begin to lose their power of reproduction. 'At one time it was said that every part of the body is wholly renewed every seven years, but now it is said that the period is only about a year and half.' The body can be in a state of health and continue to live only if the constructive changes (anabolic) gain over the destructive (catabolic). That is to say, the cells are to be enabled to renew themselves as long as possible. And this is attempted to be done in the Ayurvedic system by administering concentrated doses of differet kinds of *rasāyana* (that which tones up the rasas in the system)—preparations of herbs, or *nux vomica* seeds or Neem (*Margosa*), Haritaki, or Amalaka fruits (*emblica phyllanthus*), of milk, butter-milk, sulphur,

¹ *Kaya Kalpa* by Sri Swami Sivananda. Pub. Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, Rishikesh. Pp 48, price 50 nP.

mercury, the last one particularly being considered the most effective—it is the *śiva-bīja*, lauded as *rasa-rāja*, subjected to purification eighteen times. This treatment activates and strengthens the metabolic system, purifies the blood, tones up the nervous organism and gives a further lease of natural youthful life to all the limbs.¹ And this rejuvenation is followed by prolongation of life.

There are two methods of following the treatment : indoors, *kuṭi prāveśika* and outdoor, *vātātāpika*. For the former, three cottages are to be built each within the other, according to specifications, with windows parallel to each other at fixed distances. The unit of measurement is the hand of the person to be treated. Even the wood used for the construction must be of definite varieties of timber which have therapeutic value, e.g. *Bulia frondosa*, *Mimosa Catechu* or Sandal-wood. The cottage must be situated in a solitary place, in healthy surroundings facing East. No shade of trees must fall on the cottage. All the provisions needed for the work must be stored within the cottage.

The physician must be in constant attendance. The treatment is started at an auspicious moment in the context of planetary movements, with certain religious ceremonies and continued for some weeks, five or seven. It is supported by exercises in breath-control, continence and other necessary auxiliaries.

We do not enter into further details. It is enough to note that the treatment, *kalpa*, aims to strengthen and activate the physical base of the human system by material means. It can be fruitfully undergone only when the body has not decayed beyond a certain stage. It is laid down by Sushruta that either youth or middle age, but not old age when decrepitude has set in is the proper time for it. Even then, the beneficial effects can only be temporary; life may be prolonged for a time but again

¹ The author refers to the glandular and allied treatments in modern medical science but is not inclined to overrate their efficacy. He observes: 'They only restore diseased people to health; they do not prolong life beyond the normal span, or solve the riddle of eternal youth.'

the decay begins. That is why in the instance of the Yogin mentioned earlier, the treatment had to be taken three times; and each time it was less effective than the previous one. As Swamiji observes pointedly : 'Rejuvenation when the patient is elderly and the human machine, the most magnificent of all machines, is wearing out, has only a temporary effect as a stimulant on a tired man. Relapse quickly follows. The eyes, bright for a short time, become dull once more. The brain works vigorously for a brief period only. Afterwards weakness reasserts itself. The whole organism relapses into a state of greater decrepitude than before because it has been called on to work beyond its strength and capacity by the forced stimulation....If scientists could discover the secret of persuading the cells which compose the human body to renew themselves even in old age as they do in youth, there would be no practical limits to human life.'

II

This limitation of the effectivity of medicine, however, is sought to be overcome in certain traditions by combining it with other means, religious, yogic or spiritual. There is, for instance, the cult of the Siddhas—the Natha and Raseshvara Siddhas of the North and the Maheshwara and Jnana Siddhas of the South in India—in which by a combination of processes, yogic and physical, death is aimed to be conquered and the body enabled to live as long as one would wish. This is done either by so changing the set-up of the body-organism as to keep it constantly in a harmonious relation with the world around or by a steady elimination of the material element in the body i.e. dematerialisation, ending in a sudden spiritualisation of the body.

According to this teaching, the body of man is formed of *aśuddha māyā*, impure matter. By appropriate purificatory discipline and other measures this impurity of substance is gradually reduced and the matter is attempted to be raised into the original purity of the *śuddha māyā*. But this is not possible by individual

effort alone. It is only the grace and guidance of the Guru, a realised Guru that can help him to completely get rid of the stained maya-element and assume a pure nature, an incorruptible body, the *praṇava-tanu* or *mantra-tanu*, the body of Mantra. Only a Jivanmukta, one liberated in consciousness while in body, can acquire such a body. Yet, he is in contact with this world of *aśuddha māyā* and to that extent affected by its nature. But when he prepares to cut off even this casual connection, when he is about to become a *paramukta*, his *praṇava-tanu* becomes transformed into a pure spiritual body, *jñāna-tanu*, body of knowledge; the body of *śuddha-māyā* is transmuted into the body of *mahā-māyā*, without any element of association with matter, pure or impure.

Broadly speaking, their method lies in the purification of the cells and tissues of the body by prayer, by prescribed dieting, medicine etc. They have elaborate physico-chemical processes which include the use of a kind of elixir of the essences of mica and mercury. By certain exercises which are part of the discipline, the very molecular vibrations in the body are changed and set to a new pattern, the functions of the organs are suspended or altered. Some of the organs of the body are deliberately left unused, new ones begin to appear and the changes are so radical that the very basis of life is slowly changed from the physical into something supra-physical. The 'body' is maintained more by nourishment from the universal forces, than by the usual material food. Others may not see the results of this change outwardly. But inwardly there is a world of change. And when the Siddha changes over from his *jivanmukti* state into that of *paramukti*, there is a spectacular, visible transformation; the *praṇava tanu*, itself a transubstantiation of the natural human body, is transformed in an instant, into the *divya tanu*, the glorious body which disappears from the physical gaze leaving no material remnants behind. The passing of Ramalinga Swami in a moment of dazzling transformation into Light is an oft-quoted instance to the point.

There is also among the Natha Siddhas a system of yogic practices for the immortalisation of the body without the use of

medicine. According to this tradition, the secret of immortality lies within the human body itself. In the highest centre of the body of man, the plexus at the top of the head, the *Sahasrāra*,—a little lower than the Lotus, to be accurate—there is the Moon who represents the creative principle in Nature. He holds the Soma which is the sap of all life. There is a continuous process of distillation going in on the body and the essence so formed is deposited, drop by drop, in the Moon. This soma or *amṛta* (nectar) normally flows down from the Moon but it is swallowed up by the Sun, the *kāla-agni* (destructive fire-principle) in the navel plexus below. When this drying-up movement of the Sun gains over the supply of Soma by the Moon there sets in decay, disease and finally death. To prevent this destruction of the Soma the Natha Siddhas make use of the Hatha yogic practices as developed by the Tantriks.

By the activation of the Kundalini Shakti within the body and its ascent through the several centres of nervous energies (*cakras*), to the crown of the head where is situate the Moon, one gets in conscious rapport with the necatarous fount. And as the Kundalini joins her Lord in the Sahasrara there ensues a plenteous downpour of the Soma. The Soma pours down through the mouth of a duct called *śaṅkhini* which connects the Moon with the hollow at the roof of the palate; this duct is likened to a serpent with open mouth on either side. But the Soma thus set flowing must be prevented from being swallowed up by the waiting *kāla-agni* below. The practice adopted for this purpose is to turn the tongue backwards and close the hollow opening above by the tongue so turned. The fertilising juices are thus not allowed to go down to the region of the sun, but are drunk by the sadhaka. It is believed that a progressive absorption of this *amṛta* goes to strengthen, rejuvenate and even to transform the human body from its gross materiality into an increasingly subtle and etherial body which ultimately transforms itself into a pure divine body with a totally changed substance over which the ordinary laws of Nature would have no operation.

We may mention in passing that among the Vaishnavas too there is the conception of *cinmaya deha*, body luminous, in which the lover of God dwells in eternal communion with the Beloved in the Vaikuntha. In all these traditions, however, what is aimed at is the acquisition, by whatever means, of an eternal non-material body in which one could consciously live in the supra-physical worlds of Creation. The physical body has got to change and made to undergo whatever mutation by way of subtilisation and elimination of the material element as is indispensable for a rapid transition of the inhabitant to a subtle-physical or non-material body. But is that what is meant by *kāya-siddhi*? Perfection of the physical body ought to mean a degree of development in which all the potentialities latent in the body are brought out in their full expression and the body is no more liable to be invaded and broken into by the forces of illness, decay and death. And the body so perfected should be able to live supremely on its own rightful plane of existence, this physical earth. Just as a well-knit mental body can live for all time in the mental world, a strongly formed and centralised vital vehicle continue as long as desired on the vital plane, so too a perfected material body should be able to live unimpaired in the material world as long as the Purusha within chooses to live. That is true immortality of the body and that is also precisely what is aimed at in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. It is not only a part of the objective but a fundamental part of the process as well.

(to continue)

M. P. PANDIT

THE LIFE DIVINE

(*An Outline*)

VOL. II

CHAPTER XXIV

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPIRITUAL MAN

IN the earliest stages of the evolution we see only the inconscience, with no hint of purpose. A conscious Witness would only have seen an Energy creating Matter and organising the Inconscient into a boundless universe stretching into Space, empty of cause or purpose, a stupendous machinery with no sign of indwelling Spirit or soul, and no hint of mind or life. It would have seemed impossible that a teeming life could at all appear.

After aeons this Witness would see, in a prepared corner of the universe, a new organised development,—the phenomenon of living Matter. Nature would be concerned with establishing this new creation, but the significance of it would be veiled. An endless multiplying of species and an abundant scattering of seed established a profusion of living forms. Then Life seemed to become aware of itself in a scanty growth, but at first this new-born mind seemed only an aid to life. It did not seem possible that a mental being would emerge making life and matter its servant, building and creating arts and sciences, developing into the thinker and philosopher, the mystic and the spiritual seeker.

But after several ages the Witness would see this miracle in progress, although it would still seem impossible that the hidden Spirit could completely emerge in this material earth. After all, conscious life was only a small spec in the vast universe. It would need a more conscious Witness to discover the clue that

in each stage can be seen the preparation for the next. Thus in Life we see signs of sensation, in the movements of plants the emergence of sensitive mind. As plant life contains the possibility of the conscious animal, and as the animal mind has the rudiments of feeling and perception, so the mental being develops into the spiritual man.

There are two questions: first, the exact nature of the transition from mental to spiritual being; and second, the process and method of the evolution of the spiritual out of the mental man. It might seem at first that since life and mind have become limited in the material world, so spirit would necessarily be limited in its living embodied form; and also the spiritual evolution might be merely a part of the mental evolution and not a distinct emergence. But we have to see the clear distinction between the spiritual and the mental, and whether the former is a new power that can replace the mental dominance in life.

On the surface it seems that life is an operation of Matter, and mind an activity of life; so the soul or spirit must be only a power of mentality. But a deeper inquiry shows that what seems the result is in fact the origin. Matter could not become animate if life had not already been in Matter, and life-in-matter could not begin to feel and perceive if the mind principle had not been behind life. So too spirit must be immanent in mind and body. We have to see that spirit is something distinct from the mental being; and this can readily be done if we consider the involution as the primal condition for the evolution in the reverse order.

In the animal, mind is not detached and separate enough from the life movements and material medium to see it as something distinct, as we can see it has developed in man. Thus we can become detached from our thoughts, observe and control them. So too at first the soul does not appear distinct from the mentalised life; the soul cannot yet detach itself from the mental activities. But as the evolution proceeds this detachment of the soul-being becomes more developed. At first we realise a Purusha, an inner mental being or life-soul. But this is the soul-in-Nature,

and not the soul-in-itself. This latter reveals itself as the Soul looking at Nature with its direct sense and intimate vision. This comes when there is complete silence of the being and its surface movements, and we become aware of a Self which exceeds individuality and even surpasses universality. This brings the true liberation of the spiritual part in us.

We then see more clearly the preparatory movements of the further evolution: the pressure of the psychic Entity on mind, life and body; the pressure of the self for liberation from the ego; and the turning of mind and life towards some higher Reality. This brings a partial spiritualised mind and life. Only when we become aware of a self-existent consciousness that knows all by identity and discovers itself in all things, has the decisive emergence of soul taken place. This is the spiritual consciousness and being in us other than the mental being. But at first the spiritual consciousness is an observer of the mental, vital and bodily instruments on whose action it still depends. But it begins also to exercise a certain authority and influence on life and thought, compelling them to obey a divine Power. Or following the psychic entity we may become aware of an inner light and guidance. These are the real beginnings of a psychic and spiritual transformation. But it is possible to go further; for the spiritual being can develop in mind the higher states of being and bring down a supramental action belonging to the Truth-Consciousness. Mind, life and body can then become transformed, and no longer subject to the ignorance.

At first this truth of spirituality is not self-evident to the mind. The soul perception is not yet distinct from mental or life form; there is a mixture of mental aspiration and vital desires. But these confusions are a temporary though necessary stage of the evolution, since ignorance is the starting-point. Yet we have to see clearly that these errors of high intellectuality and idealism or ethics are not spirituality. Mental belief, creed or faith are of great value to mind and life, particularly as preparatory movements, but they belong to the mental evolution and are not

yet spiritual. Spirituality is the awakening to the inner reality of our being, a soul which is other than our mind, life and body. There comes an inner aspiration to contact the greater Reality beyond and be one with It. This is the turning and conversion of our being and consciousness.

There is in fact a double evolution : that of our outward nature of mind, life and body; and inwardly the evolution of our inner being, our subliminal and spiritual nature. Yet the evolution of mind to its greatest possible range remains the major preoccupation, so that the higher intuitive intelligence, and the overmind and supermind may be successively unveiled. If Nature's intention were other-worldly or a breaking away from our present nature, the evolution of mind would not be necessary. But for a comprehensive change of being the double evolution is justified.

This means a slow spiritual advance; for at each step the spiritual emergence has to wait for the instruments to be ready. Also as the spiritual formation emerges, it is mixed with motives and impulses of an imperfect mind, life and body. There is a necessity to return upon a step in order to bring up something of the nature which hangs back. This results in a limitation of the emerging spiritual light, so that it has to follow one line or another before it can attain its own totality. These obstacles of mind, life and body are so great that the spiritual urge tries to reject them completely and attain its own salvation. This urge for other-worldliness results in asceticism and illusionism. But this spiritual absolutism is also a purification that makes the unmingled spiritual emergence more possible for there must be a complete surrender of the lower nature to the spiritual power. If Nature refuses submission, the soul must withdraw. There is thus a dual tendency : first the establishment of the spiritual consciousness in the being, even to the rejection of Nature; and secondly a push towards the extension of spirituality to our parts of nature. Only when the first is achieved can the second proceed more speedily. Thus the urge of the consciousness towards contact with the Divine Being is the foremost preoccupation of the spiritual seeker.

We have to consider on the one hand the means utilised by Nature and on the other the results achieved by the individual. Nature has followed four chief lines to open up the inner being : religion, occultism, spiritual thought and spiritual realisation. All are connected in various ways. Religion admits an occult element in its ritual and ceremony; it has leaned on spiritual thinking—either deriving a theology or supporting a spiritual philosophy; but spiritual experience is the final aim of religion. Sometimes religion has detached itself from all these things; and occultism has put forward a spiritual aim, or more frequently confined itself to occult practice alone. Although spiritual philosophy often leans on religion and experience; yet it also has rejected these aids and has been satisfied with mental knowledge and its own discoveries. Spiritual experience has used all the three means as its starting-point, but has dispensed with them all, relying on its own strength. All these variations have been part of the evolutionary endeavour of Nature.

Each approach corresponds to something in our total being; and thus we see four necessities of man's self-expansion. He must know himself and for this he must dive deep below his own mental and physical surface; that is, he must know the inner mental, vital, physical and psychic movements, and the universal laws of the occult Mind and Life. This is the field of occultism. He must also know the hidden Powers that control the world; to enter into relation with the Creator or Cosmic Self; and follow the law of the supreme Being. This is the aim of religion, and its purpose is to link the human with the Divine. But this must be something more than a mystic revelation, it must be acceptable to his thinking mind. This is the work of spiritual philosophy. But all knowledge can be fruitful only if it is turned into experience. All religion, occult and philosophic knowledge must end in an opening up of the spiritual consciousness; and in the building of a life that is in conformity with the truth of the spirit.

Each new principle that emerges in the evolution has to pull itself out of the involution and against the opposition of the

Inconscience and the retardations of the Ignorance. At first there is the push of the submerged reality towards the surface, appearing as small, insignificant and rudimentary elements. Later a more recognisable quality begins to show itself; and finally there is the decisive emergence, a reversal of consciousness. But there is still a large and difficult growth towards perfection. The new principle has to be opened out into all fields of its possibilities. This is the process of Nature.

This has happened in the evolution of religion. At first it is crude and imperfect, and ignorant and injurious elements creep in. Dogmatism, narrowness and intolerance enter. Thus it happens that much ignorance and many errors hide under the name of religion. This is characteristic of all human endeavour, its ideals, thought, art and science.

Religion has claimed to determine truth by divine authority and inspiration which were imposed on human thought. Although it rests on inspirations and faith its procedure is excessive. Man needs faith but it ought not to be imposed. Only if man is made free from the ignorance and in possession of the highest Truth-consciousness is the claim to unquestioned acceptance warranted. Thus the premature claim has obscured the true work of leading man towards the Divine Reality, and of giving each a means of seeking a way proper to his nature.

The wider acceptance of a diversity of religious forms, such as we see in India, is the supple method of evolutionary Nature, where each is free to follow what is congenial to his thought and nature. In religion this plasticity is necessary, for its real business is to prepare man's life for the spiritual Consciousness to enter. Religion must then learn to subordinate itself and give full scope for the inner spirit to develop its own truth. In the meantime it has to give the spiritual turn and the spiritual refinement to all his activities. It is here that errors come in; for the mental, vital and physical consciousness diminish and degrade the spiritual consciousness that is trying to enter into them. Yet it is here that religion can serve as intercessor between spirit and nature. Errors

have to be eliminated, but truth need not be rejected also; the error may be only a disguised or corrupted truth.

The rudimentary spiritual consciousness in man first awakens with a vague sense of the Infinite and a sense of the limitation of the human. He becomes aware of a Power or Powers behind the physical world, and he seeks a means for calling their aid. But in the domain of the Invisible he needs a supraphysical vision, which he finds in his innate intuition and instinct. The subliminal also must have been more active in the earlier stages of man before the intellect and senses became highly developed. These intuitions created the earlier forms of religion, giving them the sense of supraphysical forces and the experience of supraphysical beings. Slowly he became aware of a soul that survived the body, and in him also were elements that responded to the invisible powers around. In this way his religio-ethical formations began. In the beginning his ethics, ritual and mystical knowledge were crude, but they acquired depth and increased in significance.

With man's mental development, however, there was an increase in his intellectualisation; and his first instinctive and subliminal formations are overlaid by a growing force of reason and intelligence. As man discovers more the processes of physical Nature he moves away from his early occultism and magic. He feels less the presence of gods and invisible powers, but he feels the need of a spiritual element in his life. As the occult elements lose their significance, the intellectual element increases. When the spiritual experience itself dwindles, man must then rely on faith and moral conduct. With the disruption of the original amalgam of religion, occultism and mystic experience these powers are free to follow their own separate ways. With the dominance of the intellect comes a complete denial of occultism and supraphysical knowledge. But still the higher intentions of Nature are kept alive in a few who can use man's greater mental evolution to raise them to a higher plane. At the present time we see a return towards an inner self-discovery and seeking and a reawakening to the power of the spirit, as a reaction to a dominant intellectuality.

The intellect having reached its natural limits has found that it explains nothing more than the outer process of Nature, so it had begun to probe the deeper secrets of mind and life. There can here be detected a pressure towards some advance of the spiritual evolution in Nature. Religion itself, passing out of the obscure infrarational stage into the bare interspace of the intellect, may now rise towards the suprarational consciousness and knowledge.

Most of the earliest stages of man's religious development are hidden in the unwritten pages of prehistory. It merely seemed a mass of superstition and Nature-worship, although behind it there must have been an effective kind of truth that has been lost. The occult knowledge of primitive man was that open to the lower vital intuitions which call in the small life-powers to aid desires and rude physical welfare.

This primitive stage, however, was followed by a more advanced type of religion of which we have records in the surviving literature of the early civilised peoples. At this stage polytheistic belief, mythology, ritual and ethical obligations were interwoven with the social system, whether tribal or national. Even though a deeper spiritual significance may have been missing yet there was a strong occult knowledge and carefully guarded mysteries which contained the first elements of spiritual wisdom and discipline. The worship of divine powers and social ethics are the main factors, with a spiritual philosophy hidden in the myths and mysteries.

The main lead to religion was through the mystic and occult-turned minds. Through these individuals the masses were led. But the spiritual experiences of the mystics were mostly encased in secret formulas and could only be passed on to initiates, and conveyed to the mass through religious symbols.

A third stage emerged which tried to make the secret spiritual experience universally available, and attainable to all worshippers through its creed and spiritual discipline. At first it was the esoteric form, which was intensive; but then developed the exoteric, expansive form. As a result of this latter diffusion, the earlier

concentration became scattered and the spiritual aspiration lost its intensity. The suprarational knowledge of the mystics became clothed in intellectual forms of creed and doctrine and ritual. The spiritual nucleus became mixed with the lower elements of mind, life and the physical nature. It was precisely this profanation of the truth and the misuse of the occult powers that was most feared by the early mystics, and guarded against. Spiritual knowledge thus became intellectualised into dogma, and living practice a dead mass of cult and ceremony and ritual. Yet the expansive movement had to be taken.

Thus religions which initially had a fundamental inner reality developed into a formalism of creed and ritual. Two tendencies appeared in this formalised religion—a catholic which tended to conserve the original character and many-sidedness, and a protestant which depended on belief, worship, and simple conduct, and appealing to the reason and ethical will. This latter tended towards rationalisation and condemned the occult elements, which brought in a narrowness to the spiritual life. The intellect, having cast out so much, has found the opportunity to deny spiritual experience and religion completely, ending up with a mass of external knowledge without the inner power to create a new life.

In India there has been both a persistence of the original intuition, as well as a wider diffusion of religion, not in any one creed or dogma but in a vast number of formulations. Occultism developed as well as spiritual philosophies. All this has followed closely the method of evolutionary Nature, allowing all ways of communion between man and the Divine. Both the primitive forms and the high spiritual aspirations dwelt side by side. This plasticity, however, was based on a fixed religio-social system which though it has been a power for preservation, has also been an obstacle and restriction to the catholicity of the native spirit.

Nevertheless India built up a many-sided religious and spiritual evolution, and even encouraged the intellect to aid the spiritual seeking, rather than narrow it as in the West. This admission of all creeds and forms has justified itself in its richness and persis-

tence of all types of spiritual attainment and endeavour. By opening the door of spiritual experience to the individual and providing each who is ready with the possibility of turning into a spiritual being, religion in India served the wider purpose of Nature to further the spiritual evolution of man. It became a rich nursery of spiritual growth and flowering, a vast school of the soul's self-realisation. Thus Religion was turned to the greatest service.

Occultism is the attempt to arrive at a knowledge of the secret truths of Nature and organise these undeveloped powers. At the same time there is the communication with supraphysical worlds and beings in order to help man to become sovereign over Nature's powers and forces. This aspiration is based on the fact that we are souls and minds that can know all the mysteries of this and other worlds and become the master of Nature. The occultist gave a great impetus to science and sought further the secrets of supernature, the discovery of the supraphysical. The work of the occultist is the possession of knowledge of the higher orders of cosmic Being, and the direction of their forces to produce effects on the physical world. It is in fact using the potential powers in Nature in order to enlarge the control of mind over life and body. Hypnotism is a modern example of an occult power; for we are all the time subject to a battery of suggestions, impulses, emotions and thought waves. If we know these movements we can master and use them or protect ourselves from them. But this is only one small province of this little explored Knowledge.

As physical Science has developed, so occultism has receded until now mind and life are regarded only as activities of Matter. Believing material Energy to be the key of all things, Science has moved towards the control of mind and life; while the spiritual is ignored as one form of mentality. But such a course has its danger in so far as scientific discoveries are misused by humanity mentally unready for handling these powers whose secret forces are unknown. In the West occultism had never achieved a systematic foundation, so that it could not defend itself against the

assault of science. But in Egypt and the East it had arrived at an ampler maturity, (the Tantras is one example). It was able to supply the basic elements of religion and even developed systems of spiritual discipline. For the highest occultism discovers the secret supernormal possibilities of mind, life and spirit and uses them for the greater effectivity of our mental, vital and spiritual being.

Occultism has become associated with magic and the supernatural. Yet it is not altogether a superstition. The application of formulas can be astonishingly effective in the use of mind power and life power. But these powers need a subtle and plastic intuition to know them and interpret their action; a formalised knowledge is limited and may be harmful. It is well that science is beginning to investigate the supernormal phenomena, but the precautions of this line of inquiry have to be rediscovered. Its aim must always be to discover the hidden truths of the mind-force and life-power and the greater forces of the concealed spirit. Occult science is the science of the subliminal, in ourselves and in world-nature, which includes the subconscious and the superconscious; and this knowledge must be put to the right use.

An intellectual approach is an indispensable aid to man's highest knowledge. On the surface, reason and the intellect are the chief instruments of our thought and action. But also intuition, the heart's devotion and the direct life-experience of the spirit have to be developed. And at the same time our thinking and reflecting mind must be helped to understand, and form a reasoned idea of the goal and the principles of the development of our nature. Spiritual experience and the growth of inner consciousness and soul perception are the means of this evolution, but always with the support of the critical reason. The intellect demands to know the nature of the spiritual Reality, although it is not capable by itself of bringing us into touch with that concrete Reality. But its help is of great importance.

Our thinking mind is concerned with the statement of general

spiritual truth and the logic of its relativities. But besides this intellectual statement it seeks also a critical control; while admitting spiritual experiences it wants to know on what truths they are founded. Unless their truth is verifiable we will be led to distrust them as being wrong or imperfect experiences of the true spiritual values. Reason can also be brought to bear on occultism and see whether its interpretation has any real significance in our whole experience. Intellect can help us in our understanding, and also in organising and controlling knowledge.

In this respect spiritual philosophy is of importance. In the East, wherever there has arisen a considerable spiritual development there has also come a philosophy to justify it to the intellect. At first there was an intuitive expression, as in the Upanishads; but later there developed a critical method and an intellectual account of what had been found by inner realisation. Or a mental ground was provided (as in Patanjali's Yoga philosophy). In the West there was the analytic method and the intellectual reason parted from the spiritual urge. Only such systems as Pythagoras, the Stoics and Epicurius developed a discipline and conduct of life, and an effort at inner perfection of the being. Later a higher spiritual plane of knowledge was reached in early Christian thought where East and West met together. But later still the intellectualisation became complete and philosophy parted company with life. Religion then became supported on credal theology; although it should be noted that a philosophic justification is not essential for spiritual truths which can be contacted inwardly through intuition. Also a strong critical control can hamper the higher illumination; an inner discrimination and inner guidance are more reliable. But there must be the bridge between the spirit and the intellectual reason for our total inner evolution. For the integral Knowledge the spiritual intelligence must be made ready in us to receive a higher light.

But these three approaches—the religious, occult and philosophic—are not sufficient until they open the door to spiritual experience. For it is only by inner realisation that the conscious-

ness can be changed and the spiritual being emerge. This is the final line of the soul's progress. Till then he has become familiar with the idea and the possibility of perfection, and made contact with greater Realities, but the transformation into the spiritual being has not yet come. Religion in the past produced the man of piety, and wisdom, but it is only after spiritual experience that we see the saint, prophet, Rishi, Yogi and Mystic. It is these latter that have given mankind its spiritual aspiration and culture.

At first spirituality is only a small light amidst the great mass of the unenlightened human mind which forms the outer self. It emerges slowly out of the religious temperament but it seeks always a spiritual support or factor. He uses it at this stage to help his mental ideas or vital and physical interests. Then some part or tendency of mind or life take on a spiritual turn or urge. An inner guidance or light, a greater control than mind or life comes to us. Only when these illuminations and intuitions govern the whole life and nature does the spiritual formation of the being begin, and there emerges the saint, seer or servant of God. The sage and seer live in the spiritual mind; the devotee in the spiritual aspiration of the heart; the saint is governed by the awakened psychic being; while in others the vital kinetic nature is driven by a higher spiritual energy in a God-given work or mission. The highest is the liberated man who has realised the Self and Spirit within him and passed into union with the Eternal, and acts by the light and energy of the Power within him. Hence follows the total liberation of the soul, mind, heart and action in the realisation of the Divine Reality. Beyond this highest spiritual evolution of the individual there opens the supramental ascent, or escape into the Transcendence.

Such has been the course of Nature's evolution of the spiritual man. We should note, however, that in recent years there has been a reaction against this evolution of consciousness, dwelling only on the evolution of life. Religion was pushed aside as superstition and spiritual realisation as shadowy mysticism. This judgement, however, rests on the false perception of the material and

the outward life alone as real. It seems to the modern mind that spirituality has achieved very little and has not solved the problems of humanity. The mystic either detaches himself from life or suggests impracticable solutions.

We have to judge spirituality from the point of view of its ability to create a new foundation of our being and life and knowledge. The ascetic refuses to accept the limitations imposed by material Nature; and if he cannot transform her he must leave her. There is also a spiritual acceptance of life and humanity with love and compassion as the motive. Such a spiritual man can guide or even create with the direct power of the Spirit. The solution that spirituality offers is essentially an inner change, a transformation of the consciousness and nature.

If there has hitherto been no life-transformation through spiritual endeavour it is because man has rejected the inward change. Spirituality can only deal with life by a spiritual method,—not by political or social or other remedies. Only the outward environment is altered, but man remains what he was, an ignorant ego-centric mental being. His constructions cannot take him beyond his present self; this can only come by a spiritual change, an evolution of his being from the superficial mental towards the deeper spiritual consciousness. To discover the spiritual being in himself is the real business of the spiritual man, as well as to help others towards the same evolution.

The spiritual tendency of the past has been to look beyond life rather than towards it, and to seek individual salvation rather than collective. Thus the spiritual evolution has not been operative in the human mass, and is therefore still incomplete—or rather only beginning. But it is only when Nature has confirmed the evolution through the individual that anything radical can be expected for a collective spiritual life. It is necessary, then, that the individual must be preoccupied with the transformation of his own nature before attempting a collective spiritual life. The mental intelligence cannot change the persistent character of human life; and neither can the spiritualised mind change it. Spirituality

illuminates the inner being and helps the mind to communicate with what is higher than itself and uplift the outward nature of the individual. But when it works in the human mass through mind as the instrument, it cannot bring about a transformation of life. Hence there has been the strong tendency to abandon any wider spiritual change and concentrate on individual salvation. A higher instrumental power than mind is needed to transform the Ignorance of Nature.

One objection against the mystic is that he seeks a purely subjective approach which is not verifiable. But the object of the mystic is self-knowledge which can only be arrived at by an inward turn. The Truth he seeks can only come through direct vision or through a knowledge by identity. But it is seen that there are different experiences and hence it is suggested that this knowledge is not truth at all but a subjective mental formation. Spiritual truth, however, must be seen to be a truth of the Infinite, one in an infinite diversity. It is inevitable therefore that there should be a many-sidedness which is a sign of the soul's approach. The intellectual idea of truth as one system or a single formula of facts reflects the limited outlook on the physical plane and disregards the field of life, mind and spirit.

This limited outlook has brought an antagonism against a multiplicity of viewpoints which has restricted man's search for truth, especially in philosophy and religion. The truth of the spirit is a truth of being and not a truth of thought. Where there is spiritual experience there is growth into spiritual being; but at the same time there are numberless possibilities of variation of experience. And the accommodation of mind and life to the spiritual truth must also vary according to the mentality of the seeker. This difference and variation is needed for the freedom of spiritual search and growth. To exceed difference one must exceed mind altogether and reach the highest integral Consciousness.

There must then be many stages in the evolution of the spiritual man and in each stage a great variety of individual formations. The nature of mind and life create this variety according

to the stage of development of the individual seeker. But this diversity is based on a fundamental unity; for the supreme Self is one and the souls are many. The supramental integration must harmonise these diversities, not abolish them.

N. PEARSON

REVIEW

Srimadvisnutattva Vinirnaya of Sri Madhvacharya—English translation by *S. S. Raghavachar*. Published by the President, Ramkrishna Ashram, Mangalore. Price Rs. 3-0-0.

Sri Madhvacharya is one of the five celebrated exponents of the Vedanta school of the the Darshana-period of Indian philosophy—a period in which logic and dialectical skill in exhibiting and establishing one's own point of view found its fullest expression. Madhvacharya has written valuable commentaries on the important Upanishads, the Bhagvat Gita and the Brahmasutras but his Vishnutattva Vinirnaya, the one under review, is regarded by many as his greatest Prakarana-Grantha. Legend holds that Madhva was an incarnation of Vayu for the purpose of destroying the false doctrines of Shankara which were more like the doctrine of Lokayats, Jains and Pasupatas but more obnoxious and injurious. In fact both epistemologically and ontologically it is opposed to the system of Shankara. The chief features of the system of Madhva are its realistic and pluralistic contentions. One can rightly say that it is one of the most organised and established systems of realism of Indian Philosophy. According to Madhva valid knowledge is that which corresponds with outside reality. There can be no knowledge which does not involve relationship between the knower and the known. Besides, the difference between the knower and the known is real. Ontologically Madhva contends that there are individual selves existing independently of each other. The Supreme Reality who is posited as the creator and the ruler of the universe is Vishnu or Narayana, the possessor of all excellences and attributes. Nature and selves are subordinate to God and depend on Him. He is not the material cause of the universe but its efficient cause.

Sn S. S. Raghavachar has done a great service to the general public and in particular to the scholars of Indian Philosophy by translating *the Viṣṇutattva Vinirnaya* into English. Professor Raghavachar points out that the title of the book may suggest that it is a theological treatise but it is not really so in as much as the pages of the book exhibit great dialectical skill and logical power in metaphysical discussions. The opening verse of the book is of a rare beauty and significance.

“Offer adoration always to Narayana, who is cognizable in all his uniqueness only through the right scriptures, who wholly transcends the ksara and the aksara and who is flawless and abounds in all excellent attributes.”

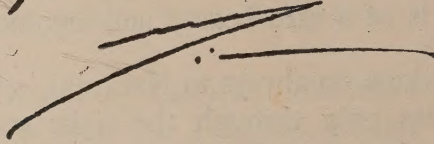
The English rendering of the cryptic and sharp Sanskrit verses has been very faithful and unusually lucid and simple. We warmly commend the book to all lovers of Indian Philosophy and expect that this English version of the text would reach a wider public.

K. C. PATI



*Faithfulness is the sure basis
of success.*

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